

My name is Rebecca Pieknik and I am a certified surgical technologist. I am speaking on behalf of the Michigan State Assembly of the Association of Surgical Technologists (MSA-AST) in support of HB 4403.

The role of the surgical first assistant is defined by the American College of Surgeon (ACS): as an allied health professional who works under the delegation of the surgeon during a surgical procedure. Clinical skills performed may include: positioning the patient, providing visualization of the operative site, hemostasis, participating in volume replacement or autotransfusion techniques, utilizing appropriate techniques in closure of body planes, applying wound dressings and providing assistance in securing drainage systems to tissue.

A certified surgical first assistant is a sterile member of the surgical team and works directly with the surgeon throughout the surgical procedure to provide quality patient care with strict adherence regarding patient safety and sterile technique.

In the year 2002 CAAHEP (Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Programs) along with AST (Association of Surgical Technologists), NSAA (National Surgical Assisting Association) and American College of Surgeons formed the accreditation process for surgical assistants. CAAHEP is the largest programmatic/specialized accreditor in the health sciences field. CAAHEP accredits more than 2000 educational programs in twenty-one (21) health science occupations across the United States and Canada. CAAHEP is sponsor-owned by more than 60 national professional organizations:

The American College of Surgeons, The American Medical Association, American Society of Anesthesiologists, American College of Physicians and 20 other of the U.S.'s top medical organizations.

Now that this standard is in place and Michigan has an accredited Surgical first assist program, it is crucial that we instill guidelines that require certification through education. This is the only way we can ensure a safe operation with optimal results for the patient.

Respectfully,

Rebecca Pieknik, CST, BHS
President, MSA-AST

